

2015

ANNUAL REPORT

You know what they say about the TransWilts...



small line, big reach

TW
TransWilts
Connecting Wiltshire's Communities



This Annual Report outlines progress in 2014-2015 and our future aspirations for TransWilts line and services. Our plans for development of the line passenger services essentially align with Network Rail control periods in five year and ten year strategies. The “Network 2020” five year plan focus between 2015-2019 being around cooperation and community development with the current franchise operator GWR. A longer term “Network 2025” ten-year strategy, based upon local CRP aspirations, informing NR control period 6 2019 to 2024 and new franchises for both Great Western and South Western regions. Our “Network 2020” Regional policy has been prepared as a key part of the DfT consultation to apply for designation of the TransWilts service as a community rail service.

Melksham Station passenger growth of 117% is the seventh highest in the UK. Passenger journeys grew from 183,000 in 2014 to 235,000 in 2015.

Strong passenger growth underpins five-year plans

Prospectus “Network 2020” for TransWilts Line 2015-2019

We seek to facilitate improved outputs for the railway and particularly the communities and businesses that are served by the Swindon to Westbury line.

Improvements for local communities are provided by **increased accessibility to public transport**, connectivity between rural market towns and principal centres, access to employment, education and public services.

Development and improvement of the local stations, as community gateways, with a more modern and prosperous railway image.

Sharing the Wiltshire Council Transport Plan Strategy 2011-2026 Vision “To develop a **transport system which helps support economic growth across Wiltshire’s communities.**”

“Increase rail connectivity through the provision of bus/ rail links and assist with the **implementation of some new stations.**”

“Support the function of **rail stations as transport hubs** and proactively work with partners to introduce services and **corridor improvements particularly**

between Chippenham, Westbury, Trowbridge and Salisbury.”

Our **application for Service Designation** if successful will substantially assist the TransWilts CRP in playing a significant role in delivering our aspirations.

Our **“Network 2020”** policy 2015-2019 sets out the future direction within the following priorities:

More community involvement with stations and the railway.

Improve stations; Melksham and Chippenham, acting as a shop windows for the town both as an inward gateway to the local community and as an outward gateway to the wider UK community using the national rail network.

Local rail service improvements supporting the rapid growth in passenger volumes since the service was restored in 2013. Extend Melksham platform to three-car length.

Overcrowding is becoming a problem on some trains. Two car units included in GWR franchise 2016 will better suit commuter timetables.

There is a need for a **more frequent hourly service and better timetable connectivity** to meet the rapidly growing community demands, particularly at Westbury.

Revenue collection improvements as overcrowded trains restrict on train ticket sales.

Wiltshire’s Local Transport Plan objectives are supported by **reducing the need to travel by car and promoting our sustainable transport alternative.**

To **enhance the journey experience of transport users.**

To **engage and communicate with Friends of TransWilts both individual and corporate** in activities such as station adoption.

Promoting special events such as Santa Train and Weymouth Wizard.



Ambitious longer term aspirations

Prospectus “Network 2025” for TransWilts Line 2019-2025

- Extension of the service Swindon to Salisbury and through to Southampton Airport
- A new station at Wilton Parkway
- Upgrade Westbury as interchange hub
- Third platform at Chippenham facilitates Bristol Metro regional service via reopened Corsham Station

Extension of the TransWilts service through Salisbury to Southampton Airport.

Door-to-door travel times to Southampton Airport would be typically one hour forty minutes from Chippenham, one hour thirty minutes from Melksham,

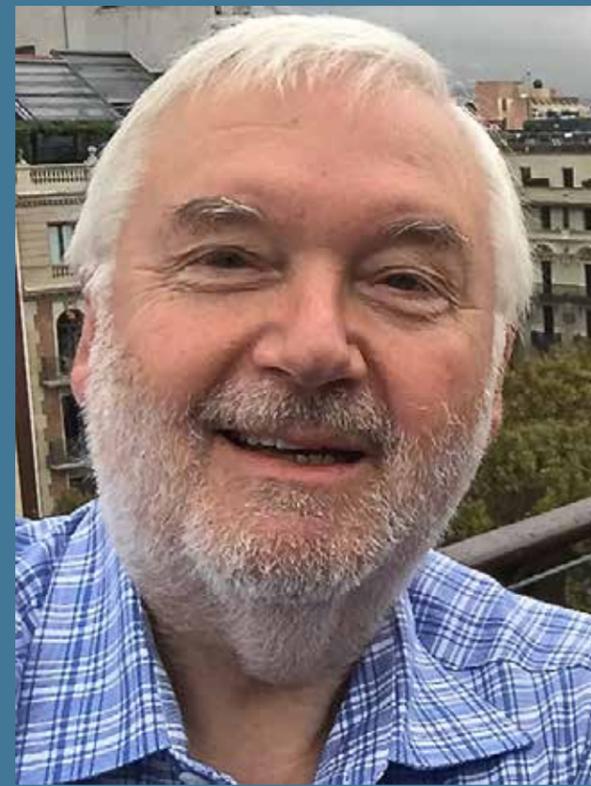
Extended early and late train services to coincide with the Airport’s first departure times and last arrival times.

Upgrade of Chippenham station third platform to a regional platform to support Corsham Station.

Upgrade of Westbury platform 0 as a three-car service platform interchange capability for **regional connectivity**.

Increase rolling stock to three-car trains.

Additional station at Wilton Parkway for Salisbury and a **sustainable gateway for visitors to Stonehenge.**



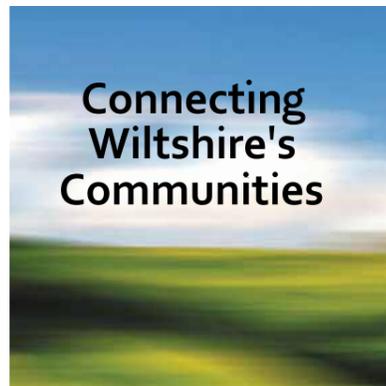
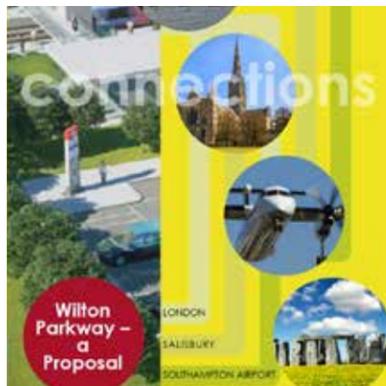
A message from the Chairman

“It is a privilege to be part of TransWilts, and at such an exciting time, both in rail and in the growth of our regional railway. The hiatus in the electrification of the Western Region will no doubt bring new challenges in addition to those already faced in 2015. We have ambitious plans for further growth with improving connectivity for our Wiltshire communities. Our progress depends upon our Friends, members and volunteers, so we were delighted that they received national award recognition in 2015. Our continuing strong partnership support from GWR and Wiltshire Council is essential and is gratefully acknowledged.”

– Paul Johnson

pauljohnson@transwilts.org

Highlights and Progress in 2015



An Interview with our Community Rail Officer

The success of the service depends on the Community Rail Officer, so we thought you would enjoy Graham's views on how things have gone and where we are going.

Passenger Growth

The ORR passenger growth report for 2014-2015 showed, for the second year, a 117% growth in passenger traffic at Melksham. The 7th highest growth in the country.

Melksham Station passengers have grown from the pre-service total of 12,080 in 2012-2013 to 51,858 in 2014-2015. A growth of 329% in two years.

Our own passenger survey indicates line numbers growing to 235,000. A 28% increase over last year and a 1,200% increase over the pre-service level of 18,000 in 2012-2013.

An innovative approach has been introduced to timetable publications. Mini-Guides, which fit in branded travel wallets, were issued for the December 2015 timetable. The guide contains both rail and bus timetables for our travel corridor.

CIC formation

This is the first Annual Report since the formation of the CIC in January 2015.

We are grateful for the financial contribution from our Stakeholder Partners GWR and Wiltshire Council, whilst SWT are an important Corporate Sponsor.

The CIC has invested in a comprehensive web site which facilitates support in both Rail and Bus public transport community issues.

The Coffee Shop remains an important forum for those interested in transport issues.

We have started to seek commercial sponsors, in particular to support station adoption and engagement with employers in our transport corridor.

We are taking a hard look at our priorities and resources for 2016.

Friends and Community

A new initiative in 2015 was the introduction of Friends membership, both individual and corporate.

Our Friends Secretary is supporting with newsletters and adding expertise and humour to our news articles. We were therefore delighted that Bob was recognised by winning the individual volunteer in the RailFuture Awards 2015.

In addition we won three other RailFuture Awards, these were for "Best Social Media Promotion", "Best Campaign" and "Best Website". Our volunteer Lee Fletcher received national recognition as an ACoRP Finalist.

The Weymouth Wizard was a great success running on the TransWilts Line because of electrification works, but averaging more than 300 passengers per train. An 'extra carriage' Santa Special was again operated on a Sunday in December.

Summer 2015 brought both challenges and opportunities. Engineering works in Box Tunnel and Bathampton brought two suspensions of our services, followed by four weeks of an hourly service by diverted trains from Portsmouth. I am delighted to report that the hourly services ran to time, providing a very practical illustration of what can be done.

The August Saturday diversion of the Weymouth Wizard, an eight-carriage through train to Weymouth, gave us a marketing opportunity, and the community and Great Western worked together in marketing the opportunity, carrying some 350 passengers each way on that single train. Around half of the passengers heard about the train through our social media campaign, which won an award at the national RailFuture awards in November.

Other awards at RailFuture were won by our overall campaign, and by our associated "Coffee Shop" online forum, where more than 20,000 messages were posted during the year on rail and related subjects.

Volunteers and supporters are key to the success of the line; there are far too many to mention each individually, but THANK YOU. In the case of the TransWilts, much of their work is away from the

line promoting it, but you'll see them out in force at such times as the Santa Special, run with our Melksham Railway Development Group associates. Our team of counters travelled on all trains over a weekend in early December, reporting passenger numbers of 666 on Saturday, 544 on Sunday and 662 on Monday.

Our Friends initiative is an important support element, and one that will grow in importance in 2016 under Bob Morrison's leadership.

In the Autumn, we were delighted to welcome Claire Perry, MP, the rail minister as our keynote speaker, and in April 2016 we look forward to welcoming Christian Wolmar and Nigel Harris.

I attended a number of meetings and events including ACoRP in Nottingham and London, and Citizen Rail in Torquay.

Operational staff and passengers are the daily bread and butter of the line, and it's great to have such a positive bunch. Even on a cold, wet November morning I'm greeted by smiling faces.

This year, pocket timetables and travel wallets were produced and distributed. It's heartening to ride the train and see people pulling out their TransWilts wallet holding their



ticket, and it's great to be asked for further timetable supplies.

Small but significant timetable changes in May and December have brought a through train each day to and from Frome, a recast of Sunday services to a more useful and regular pattern. In December the retiming of the 15:14 off Swindon to 15:12 allows a faster path and a connection to the south at Westbury; some destinations such as Southampron are now reachable an hour earlier.

One of the most notable changes was the rolling up of the CRP into a Community Interest Company. It's logical to take a wider look at passengers' requirements which are door to door, and with the rapid passenger growth, it's necessary to take a longer term look at where the line is going.

– Graham Ellis
grahamellis@transwilts.org

Our Friends Secretary talks about the members' initiative

Bob Morrison is a leading community rail volunteer and he has a 2015 RailFuture Award to prove it. He has led the Friends membership initiative since its inception to bring a wider membership into TransWilts involvement.

A journalist by trade Bob has been a regular user of the railways for more than 40 years. Earlier than that, as a nine year old going to school, he occasionally swapped a 2p bus fare for a 3p child's single to travel with British Rail from Reading to Reading West.

Since moving to Swindon five years ago he became involved with the TransWilts on the eve of the new improved service introduced in 2013. So while not involved in the campaigning to gain the extra trains, he has been very concerned to demonstrate the success of them and the campaign to retain and enhance them. Based at the northern end of the line he is keen to see better connections achieved at Westbury with trains heading to the West Country, particularly with the last remaining direct services to stations west of Taunton via Bristol likely to be removed when electrification arrives.

As a non-driver Bob is also a regular bus user and spends many hours researching how to reach places by public transport with a taxi only coming into play as a last resort. He readily admits to being surprised how often he is able to reach out of the way places by public transport after a lot of investigating.

As Friends Administrator he oversees the receiving of applications and dealing with renewals and queries from members. He also contributes many of the articles to the regular TransWilts newsletter which is circulated to Friends and opinion formers in the area. He also provides material for the CIC website at transwilts.org

The Friends of the TransWilts are a vital part of the organisation, while some are content to be armchair supporters, and are most welcome as such, others volunteer to assist with counting numbers on trains or supporting other initiatives the organisation is involved in.

– Bob Morrison
friends@transwilts.org



Accounts (unaudited)

Financial year 1st February 2015 to 31st January 2016

Brought Forward	Assets		£
TWCRP opening balance	12,500.00	1	
TOTAL Opening			12,500.00

Incoming	Receipts		£
Grants	15,528.00	2	
Bank Interest	0.57		
Project Funding	3,000.00	3	
Friends & Sponsors	1,207.00	4	
TOTAL			19,735.57

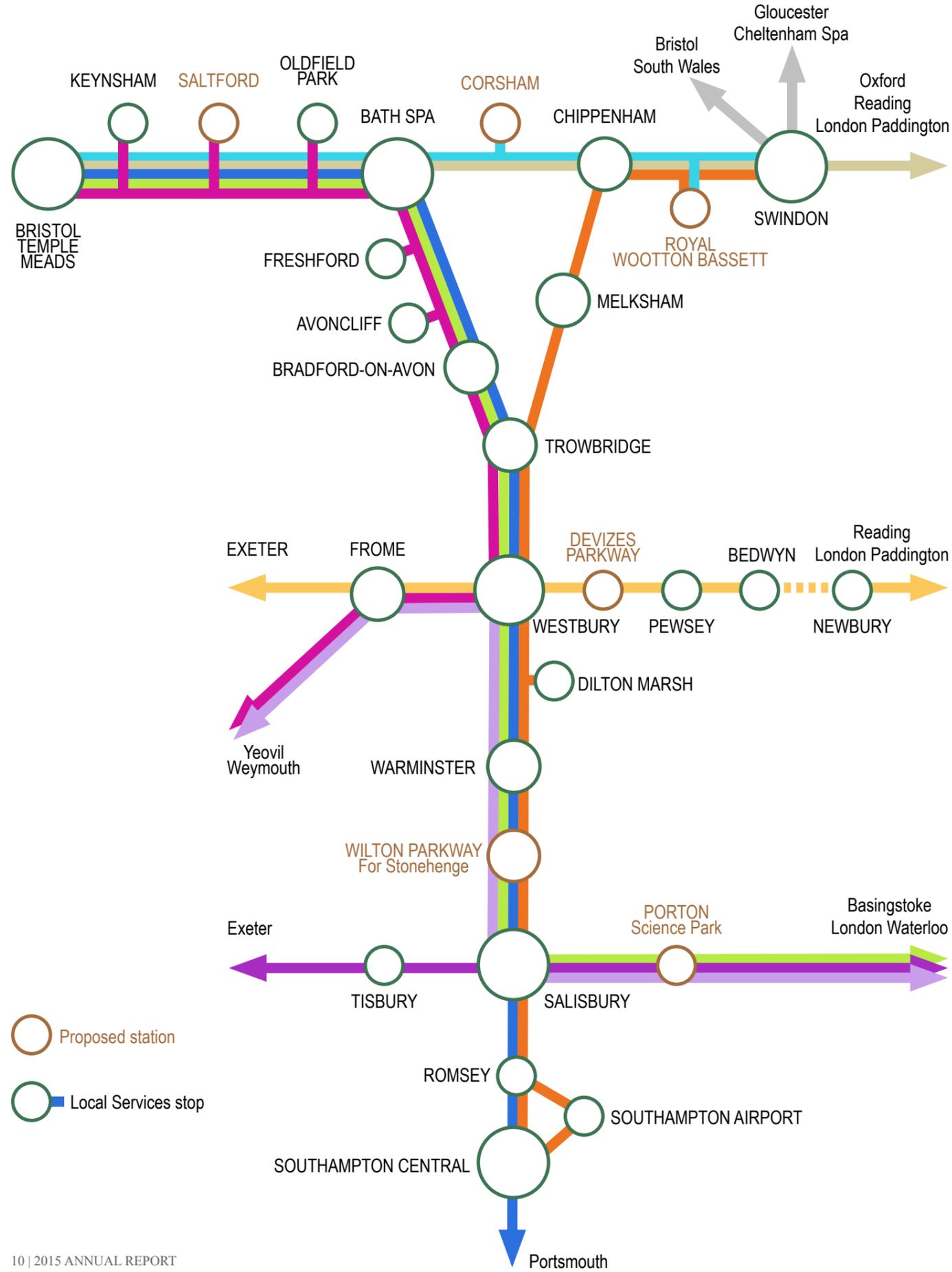
Outgoing	Expenditure		£
Secretariat & CRP Officer	7,396.75	5	
Offices & Room Hire	3,162.78	6	
Stationery & Newsletters	2,626.13	7	
Travel	246.60	8	
Professional Fees inc. Insurance	487.20	9	
Friends Administration & setup	1,400.00	10	
Bus activities inc. setup	1,290.00	11	
Project Activities	1,812.24	12	
TOTAL			18,421.70

Closing Carried forward	Assets		£
Cash at Bank	14,509.07	13	
Plus Debtors	1,000.00	14	
Less Creditors	(1,695.20)	15	
TOTAL Closing			13,813.87

Notes to Accounts

- Accounts of CRP and CIC have been amalgamated with a transfer of bank cash from CRP to new CIC account.
- GWR Customer & Community Fund, and Wiltshire Council
- GWR Project Fund, and Wilton TC
- Friends membership and corporate sponsors
- Administration of CRP and CIC activities including consulting contract payments
- Office rental and Conference room hire
- Stationery including timetables, newsletters, brochures and travel wallets. Stationery stock is written off as purchased
- Reimbursement of travel expenses
- Cost of liability insurance, web site domain fees
- Friends administration including set up costs for web site, design of membership system and administration of "coffee shop" forum
- Costs for activities associated with the Bus and community activities including web site amendments
- Projects: Melksham Station and Wilton Station
- Cash at Co-operative Bank
- Debtors cheques un-cleared
- Creditors and unpaid pro-forma invoices

Rail Routes serving Wiltshire





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Community Interest Company (Company Number 9397959 registered in England and Wales)